

BX
5136
.E17

East

The University of Chicago
Libraries



M
P
M
1818
8817

*in Bellwood Mendon Adams Co. Ill.
June 1st 1840*

THE WAY CALLED HERESY :

A DISCOURSE

DELIVERED ON THE DAY OF THE
JUBILEE OF THE BIBLE,

IN

THE TEMPORARY CHURCH OF
ST. MICHAEL'S, BATH.

BY THE

REV. JOHN EAST, M.A.

JUBILATE DEO !

SECOND THOUSAND.

Bath :

PRINTED BY GEORGE WOOD, BATH AND CHELTENHAM
GAZETTE OFFICE.

SOLD BY SEELEY AND CO., HAMILTON AND CO., HATCHARDS, AND
NISBETT, LONDON ; BY BINNS, AND AT THE LIBRARIES, BATH ;
RICHARDSONS, AND CHILCOTT, BRISTOL ; LANE, CLIFTON ;
WIGHT, AND LOVESY, CHELTENHAM.

*Price, Sixpence ; or, from the Author, for gratuitous distribution,
50 for One Pound.*

1835.

BX 5136

.E 17



Ch. Hist

Pur

+

THE WAY CALLED HERESY.

“THIS I CONFESS UNTO THEE, THAT AFTER THE WAY WHICH THEY CALL HERESY, SO WORSHIP I THE GOD OF MY FATHERS, BELIEVING ALL THINGS WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAW AND IN THE PROPHETS.”

Acts xxiv. 14.

ST. PAUL then was charged with heresy. He was reputed a heretic by men, who had sufficient influence to cause his arrest, imprisonment and trial in the Imperial Court of Rome. Who were his accusers? The members of a corrupt and fallen church—a church at that very time fast filling up the measure of its iniquities, and ripening for destruction. Possessing the written revelation of God, they had made it of no effect by their traditions, which, with them, were the ultimate standard of truth. By such men St. Paul was accused of holding heretical sentiments; and of adopting and teaching heretical practices. And what did they call heresy? What was the system of doctrine and practice which the Apostle confessed to be his? It was taking all things written in the Law and in the Prophets, exclusive of unwritten tradition, as the Rule of Faith, and the worship of God according to that Rule.

My brethren, there is another church, which has been very unsparing in its charges of heresy, against all who do not submit to its authority. The minister who now addresses you, and you who are here to listen to the word of God from his lips, are of the number of the accused. In the judgment of the Church of Rome, WE ALL ARE HERETICS; and I, for one, am free to ‘confess, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.’ It will be my object now to shew what the Roman Catholic Church calls heresy;

and then, how this awful sin is charged upon the way in which we worship the God of our fathers.

I unfeignedly lament, that the times in which we live impose upon me, as a spiritual watchman and shepherd of our British Israel, the painful necessity of dwelling upon themes like this. Other subjects are far more to my taste. May the Holy Spirit of God inspire my soul only with the love of truth, and with a single eye to his glory. I would not wilfully misrepresent any doctrine of the Church of Rome, nor would I excite one unkindly emotion in any breast towards the members of that church. To-night we stand upon our defence, and if in the course of that defence our accusers are themselves proved to be guilty of the crime, which they endeavour to fasten upon us, then I beseech them, for their own souls' sake, to look well to the awful predicament in which they stand on the brink of eternity.

I. I am to shew you what the Church of Rome 'calls heresy.' Here she shall speak for herself. In the Abstract of the Douay Catechism, used in the present day in her schools, and, if I mistake not, in the Roman Catholic schools of Bath, I find the thing thus defined: 'Heresy is an obstinate error in matters of faith.' I am not now disposed to find fault with the form of this definition. But I am anxious that you should understand what that church means by her definition. She teaches her children, that they 'must firmly believe all matters of faith;' and then asks, 'What are the points of faith we are taught by the Catholic Church? Such only as God has revealed to her.' She asks again, 'Are all these points of faith written in the Holy Bible?' Mark the answers. '*Many* are there clearly expressed; and *some* are *only* delivered by the living voice of the faithful, and are called apostolical traditions.' She once more asks, 'What are those traditions?' Her reply claims close attention. 'Many things appertaining to faith, as likewise to discipline, which the Apostles did not write, but only preached and taught by word of mouth, which the holy Church has carefully delivered from father to son in all ages down to us.' There are,

therefore, she says, 'many matters of faith, and which we must firmly believe, but which are not written in the Holy Bible.' These traditions, or matters of faith, have never yet been clearly defined or fairly written down and published. They are to be traditions for ever. But I take the liberty to open my Bible—a liberty to which I am not entitled under the Church of Rome. I compare some of these matters of faith with that Holy Book. I am startled at finding them not only not in its pages, but palpably contrary to what is written there. For instance. The Church, of course upon the authority of tradition, declares, 'that as soon as Christ was dead, his blessed soul descended into that part of hell called Limbo, to free the holy fathers who were there,' and none of whom went to heaven till Christ's resurrection. Whereas, the written word informs us, that Jesus confirmed the faith of the penitent and dying thief with the assurance—'To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.' The Scriptures give no shadow of a sanction for this fabulous offspring of tradition,—Christ's preaching the joyful tidings of redemption to the souls of his saints, who died before him, and in hell were waiting for his deliverance. The priest explains, and presses me with the authority of the Church. But I cannot, and will not, believe any thing that is repugnant to what I see written in the Holy Scriptures. This is obstinate error in matters of faith—THIS IS HERESY! I may plead for the sufficiency of God's own written word. I may pause at those words—'The law—the doctrine of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.' I read that Timothy found the Holy Scriptures thus perfect—able to make wise unto salvation. I say—That which is perfect in itself, so that the man of God may thereby become 'perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,' is surely sufficient for me to believe, and for the Church to enforce. In matters of faith, I must stop where the Bible stops. This is what THEY CALL HERESY. In a word, this awful sin is attributed to every man, who deliberately rejects any article of faith, which the Roman Catholic Church thinks fit to prescribe.

And here, brethren, I would beg the Romanists to pause at the sentence which they pronounce on those who are guilty of what 'they call heresy.' It cuts them off from the hope of salvation, for Rome declares, that there can none be saved out of her communion. They are chargeable with what she terms 'MORTAL SIN.' Observe one other question in the Douay Catechism, and its answer, in illustration of this point. 'Whither go such as die in mortal sin?' The dread answer is—'TO HELL FOR ALL ETERNITY,' p. 71. 'Are all obliged to be of the true Church?' A. 'Yes: no one can be saved out of it.' Butler's Catechism. Such is the 'faith and charity' of that church from which we have departed, and that for ever!

II. I am to shew you, my brethren, that the mortal sin of heresy is, by the Roman Catholics, charged upon the way in which WE worship the God of our fathers. A tremendous accusation! A crime whose penalty is nothing short of HELL FOR ALL ETERNITY! It is surely then a thing of no small importance for us to examine the various points of the indictment lodged against us in the court of Rome: to ascertain the doctrines which that court pronounces to be heretical. For we see, upon their own statement, that the differences between us must be fatal to one party or the other: that eternal life and eternal death are at stake upon the issue of the trial. The one or other of us must answer to that prophetic description given by St. Peter. 'There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in DAMNABLE HERESIES, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways: by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words made merchandise of you.' (2 Pet. ii. 1—3.)

1. With St. Paul, 'we believe all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets,' and we believe no more as being needful to salvation. The Church of England puts it thus in her 6th Article, and every Protestant will readily subscribe or assent to it. 'Holy Scripture containeth

all things necessary to salvation : so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or to be thought requisite or necessary to salvation.' This they call HERESY, and we who subscribe to it are branded with the name of heretics, and laid under the malediction of the Papacy. The Romanists have palmed upon mankind the Apocryphal books, which contain most manifest errors both in doctrine and precept ; some of whose authors themselves tell us they were not inspired ; and which never were received, or declared to be inspired till the Council of Trent. That great and celebrated assembly of Papal divines met in the year 1545, and renewed its sessions through eighteen successive years, under the fullest sanction of the court of Rome. It met to impose eternal silence upon private judgment, and to put down Protestantism for ever. Its professed object was, so fully to discuss and to settle all the various points of Christian doctrine, that henceforth there should be a standard of Catholic truth, which none might dispute : and its authority is constantly appealed to in the Roman Catholic Catechisms. Yet, with the Scriptures before them, and the whole store of tradition so carefully preserved, and with all the advantages of infallibility, they took eighteen years to complete that standard ! The Council itself, though made up of Papal divines, without a single Protestant, was agitated by the fiercest controversy on every subject of importance ; and anything but unity of sentiment existed, as appears from the testimony of even Roman Catholic historians. But, as the late Dr. Doyle, a prelate of that Church, wrote ten years since, that Council so decided every matter at issue between the Romanists and the Protestants, that every question is set at rest for ever. Hear, therefore, the sentence of that Council—the definite sentence of the Papal Church. 'The Church receives and venerates, with equal piety and reverence, the oral traditions of the Church, as the books of the Old and New Testament,' including the Apocrypha, as being equally inspired and dictated by the Holy Spirit, and whoever shall not receive those books as sacred and

canonical, and shall knowingly and deliberately despise those traditions, 'Let him be accursed.' Their writers speak out on this subject. One says, 'Scripture is not a sufficient rule of faith; for it is much the least part of revealed truth:' a second, 'much the greatest part of the Gospel is conveyed to us by tradition:' a third advances a step higher, 'the excellency of traditions is far superior to the Scriptures which the Apostles have left us in writing:' the Jesuits at Clausenburg boldly said, 'we shall find, that both are of great moment in the church; but the unwritten word more than the written.' Wonderful consistency! the Church requires me to give equal reverence to the Bible and to traditions. I prefer the Bible. She pronounces me a heretic and accursed. But her own sons—her own Cardinals prefer tradition, and treat it with comparatively greater honour than the infallible word of God, and they are considered true Catholics and are blessed! Well, then, after *this* way, which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things that are written in the Law and in the Prophets, in the Gospel and in the Apostles. I dare not impeach or question the perfection and sufficiency of the Lord's own word. I see that our Lord himself *never* appealed to tradition, but *always* to the Scriptures of truth. St. Paul vindicated himself upon the same grounds: and I shall prefer being in heresy with St. Paul, to being a Catholic of Rome.

2. I look again into the Douay Catechism, and read—'What is the Church?' The answer is, 'It is the congregation of all the faithful under Christ, their invisible head, and his Vicar on earth, the Pope.' I agree with the definition thus far, but no farther: 'The Church is the congregation of all the faithful under Christ, their invisible head.' Blessed truth! sublime consideration! My dear brethren, rejoice in this, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, hath made Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is his body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all.' Mysterious, happy, glorious union! To believe, to realize this is the highest bliss we can enjoy upon earth, and it is the privilege of

every believer in Jesus, to regard himself as a living member of that spiritual body, of which He is the head. And must I descend from this eminence of blissful contemplation, to seek for one on earth, who calls himself 'Christ's Vicar?' It would seem so, if I am to believe what the Church teaches respecting herself. But may I be permitted to open the Bible again and inquire, where is the divine appointment of this supremely important office and dignity—His Vicar upon earth? Where is the Pope mentioned, either in sacred history or in prophecy? Did St. Paul address HIM, when he wrote his Epistle to the Romans? No: not the slightest mention is made of such a person or such an office. Yet there had been a church at Rome for several years. Again, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul informs us, that the ascended and triumphant Saviour 'gave some, Apostles; and some, Prophets; and some, Evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.' But here is no Pontifex Maximus, no Vicar of the Son of God, no Pope, on whose toe all the kings and prelates of the earth are to imprint the servile kiss. Does St. Peter, whose successors these Popes are represented to be, say aught upon the subject? No: not one word. Did the Lord Jesus leave behind him any intimation, that he should require and employ a Vicar upon earth? On the contrary, the very title and office are forbidden. 'Call no man FATHER upon earth: for one is your Father which is in heaven.' Our Lord forbid not the use of his name by a child in speaking to or of a parent; nor as expressing that endearing relation, which subsists between a minister of Christ and the souls whom he has begotten in Christ by the Gospel. But he did forbid his disciples, as then representing his Church, doing that which every Roman Catholic must do, call a man the Pope, or Father—*i. e.* the spiritual parent and head, the supreme Bishop of the visible Church on earth. Was such a dignitary known and acknowledged by the primitive Church? No, my brethren. It was not till nearly 600 years after Christ, that the title of

UNIVERSAL BISHOP was claimed, and then not by the Bishop of Rome, but by John, the Patriarch of Constantinople. Against this title, Gregory, the then Bishop of Rome, remonstrated, not as an infringement of his right; 'but,' said he, 'I confidently say, that whosoever calls himself UNIVERSAL BISHOP, or Priest, or desires to be so called, is, in his advancement of himself, the forerunner of Antichrist, because he arrogantly puts himself above the rest.' Yet, shortly afterwards, it was conferred by Phocas, Emperor of the East, upon Boniface III., then Bishop of Rome, as a reward for assisting him in the path of ambition. The title of Popes, or universal Fathers, the Bishops of Rome did not receive till nearly 400 years after, or the beginning of the eleventh century. They loved the forbidden title and its authority. Hear the bull of Boniface VIII. 'We declare, affirm, decree, and pronounce, to every human creature, that it is absolutely necessary to salvation, to be subject to the Pope of Rome.' Accordingly, he has even been addressed by this blasphemous title, 'OUR LORD GOD THE POPE.' Nay, one Roman Catholic author declares, that 'all the princes of the universe honour and worship the Pope, as the supreme God.' We are not to be surprised, then, to read the following language from the pen of one of these so-called Vicars of Christ. 'The Pope hath both swords, the temporal and the spiritual: and whosoever endeavours to take this privilege from the Church of Rome, is without doubt to be judged a HERETIC.' And is there nothing in the annual customs of modern Rome, that points with a significant finger to the memorable passage of St. Paul's second Epistle to the Thessalonians, ii. 3. 4? 'Let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition: who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped: so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.' Who is this, but the head of the Roman Catholic Church? You ask for a fact in proof. I give you one, from the pen of an eye witness. 'There is a ceremony practised on

some of the great festivals of Rome, which brings this description home to the Pope in a remarkable manner. On these occasions the Pope, seated in a chair of state, borne upon men's shoulders, is brought in at the west door of St. Peter's church, with his three crowns carried before him, surrounded by men, holding up long fans made of feathers to keep off the flies, a number of Cardinals, Bishops, and other dignitaries, and his military guard. In this way he is carried in state to the east end of the church, and there placed on a THRONE, ELEVATED ABOVE THE HIGH ALTAR, where he receives the homage of the attendant dignitaries, who bow before him, and kiss the cross on his shoe. Thus, literally, he exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, above the consecrated host itself, which on that very altar is accustomed to be worshipped—sitting in the temple of God *as God*.

Men would naturally look for paragons of divine knowledge, of spirituality, heavenly-mindedness, and moral purity, in the men who have occupied what is called the chair of St. Peter. Then read the lives of the Popes, as written, not by prejudiced Protestants, but by Roman Catholics. You will find in the list of the Bishops of Rome, Marcellinus, who, through fear of death, sacrificed to idols: Liberius and Felix II. Arians: Anastasius II. a Nestorian: Honorius I. a Monothelite, himself anathematized by the Council of Constantinople: John XXII. who was brought to a recantation of heretical sentiments in 1316: John XXIII. whom the Council of Constance deposed for his vices—at the very time when there were THREE Popes: many Popes issued decrees contradictory to each other, some confirming and others contradicting the very same doctrines: Stephen VI. dragged the body of his predecessor from the grave and treated it with the vilest indignity: many of the Popes gained their dignity by downright simony; and not a few have been monsters of immorality and uncleanness. Yet Bellarmine asserts, that the whole of Christianity is concerned in the doctrine of the Pope's supremacy. But I have done with them. Here again, therefore, we incur the anathema of this pretended representative

of our merciful and compassionate High Priest: for 'after this way, which they call heresy, so worship we the God of our fathers,' since we choose to obey God rather than man, and refuse to call the Pope of Rome 'Father upon earth,' or to acknowledge his vicarious headship over the Church of Christ.

3. The Church of Rome has more objects of religious worship than the Triune Jehovah: and she has more mediators than Him, of whom St. Paul says, There is one Mediator between God and man. Through the length and breadth of Christendom, I see temples, churches, chapels, altars, erected in honour of angels and departed saints: very numerous holidays are celebrated in remembrance of them—more numerous than the days, which the Lord requires and receives from us as devoted to his own service: vows are made unto them and confession of sin: sacrifices to God are offered in honour of them, especially the sacrifice of the mass; *i. e.* according to the Romish faith, CHRIST IS OFFERED UP IN HONOUR OF THE SAINTS: the highest hopes and the most implicit trust are reposed in them: they are called upon, not only as intercessors, but also are prayed *to* and praised *for* every blessing, both temporal and spiritual, a sinner can enjoy or expect in time or in eternity, even the blessings of grace and glory: and their very relics—their bones, their tears, their blood, even their tattered rags are revered and deposited in sacred places, to receive the adoring honours of the faithful. The Romanists make large use of images in their worship, and justify it in precisely the same words and by the same arguments which the heathen use in justification of their idolatry. It is no uncommon thing to hear the idolatrous inhabitant of India say—'I do not worship the stone which I see, but I serve him whom I do not see.'

'In the city of Rome itself, in the church of St. Peter, the image of St. Peter, (the toe of which is kissed by devout Papists till it is worn quite bright, and before which numbers daily prostrate themselves,) was formerly an image of the old heathen god Jupiter, the change having been effected merely by removing a thunderbolt which he held in his right hand, and

putting a key in its place. What then is the difference between the worship it now receives from the Papist, and that formerly paid it by the pagan Roman !

The learned men of the Papal Church, indeed, make some specious distinctions between different kinds of worship : but the Scriptures make no such distinctions, neither do the majority of mankind understand or observe them. Even those learned men do not agree with respect to those distinctions, and their great advocate, Cardinal Bellarmine, scruples not to term the worship due to saints, *an eminent kind of adoration*. Their renowned Azorius also observes, 'we honour the saints not only with that worship which we pay to men who excel in virtue, but also with *divine* worship and honour, which is an act of religion.' But these practices are an integral part of Romanism, and they who deny their propriety are pronounced *to think impiously* ; and, adds the Council of Trent, referring to its decrees in favour of the use of images in divine worship, 'If any one shall teach or think contrary to these decrees, LET HIM BE ACCURSED.'

Well, brethren, we think and teach, and we trust that you all think and receive a doctrine the contrary of all this. 'Believing all things that are written in the law,' we see that plainer words could not be written than those which forbid these practices, and declare the wrath of God against those who observe them. 'Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above,' &c. 'Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.'

Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,' *i. e.* with a religious service. This, this is HERESY, my fellow Protestants, in the judgment of the Roman Catholic Church, if we so worship the God of our fathers, as not to give any portion or shadow of his glory to others, or his praise to graven images. Be it so : we will bear the heavy imputation, until we meet those, who cast it upon us, at the judgment-seat of Christ.

4. I am sure you will agree with me, that nothing can be of greater moment for us to know, and clearly

to understand than the grounds on which, when we 'worship the God of our fathers,' we are accepted. These grounds must be sought either in or out of ourselves—either in our own merits, or in merits not our own. Let us then first look into our state as moral and accountable beings, and see whether it affords any shew of personal merit or ability to meet the righteous demands of God's holy law. But the result of this examination is extremely humbling, and it is thus distinctly and yet moderately stated: 'The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith, and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us when we have that good will.' Then where is the basis of our hope before God? As Protestants, we believe and profess, that 'we are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort.' Further, 'Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet they are pleasing and acceptable to God IN CHRIST, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree discerned by the fruit.' These are the grounds on which we cheerfully hope for acceptance with God both of our persons and our services, believing that all things written in the Scriptures of truth confirm our wholesome and comfortable doctrine. We there are told, what impartial experience evinces, that we naturally are 'dead in trespasses and sins:' that we are 'carnal, sold under sin:' that 'the carnal mind is enmity against God, is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be:' and that 'they that are in the flesh cannot please God.' But then the finger of revelation points to Christ—'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh

away the sin of the world.' We are assured that 'his blood cleanseth from all sin.' To the consolation of the convinced and trembling sinner it is announced, that 'by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast.' Despair takes its flight, while 'we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.' And whose is that 'righteousness by faith,' which is the solid foundation of our waiting hope—a hope embracing the pardon of sin and a full justification before God now, and eternal life in his immediate presence directly after death? It is even 'the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all, and upon all them that believe.'

On these grounds, when, as a poor law-condemned sinner, I draw near to God in prayer, or pass through the gate of death into his awful presence,—on these grounds, laid down as I find them in the book of God, I hope, I humbly, yet confidently, look for a gracious and even loving acceptance, such as the returning prodigal received in the arms of his compassionate father. But, my dear brethren, can you believe this is the 'way which they call HERESY,' who submit their judgment to the dictates of the Church of the City of the Seven Hills? It is even so, and I will make it plain.

There used to be in a public office book of the Church of Rome, the following questions and answers. 'Dost thou believe that thou shalt come to heaven, not by thy own merits, but the virtue and merits of Christ's passion?' 'I do believe it.'—'Dost thou believe that Christ died for our salvation, and that none can be saved by their own merits, or any other way but by the merits of his passion?' 'I do believe it?'—Now, my brethren, note well this dark spot upon the character of that Church. These questions and answers were ordered to be expunged from that book by the great Council, of course because they were heretical. Yet this is the infallible and unchangeable Church! What then do they propose to—nay, enforce upon our belief? Hear the Council. It asserts that 'the good works of a justified person are not so the gifts

of God, that they are not also the merits of the justified person ; and that he being justified by the good works performed by him through the grace of God and the merit of Jesus Christ, whose living member he is, does truly merit increase of grace and eternal life.' To say the least, here is confusion, where there ought to be the utmost simplicity. But there is more. It mixes up the good works of man with the merits of Christ, as the clay was mixed with the iron in the visionary image of Nebuchadnezzar. But let us see how the Romanists themselves understand, explain, and apply this doctrine. Maldonate, the Jesuit, asserts, 'that we do as truly and properly merit rewards, when we do well through God's grace, as we do deserve punishment when without this grace we do ill.' Andredius states 'that eternal blessedness is no less due to the good works of good men, than eternal torments are to the evil works of wicked men ; and that eternal life is so the recompence of good works, that it is not so much given of God freely and out of liberality, as it is out of debt.' Bellarmine declares, 'that our good works do merit of condignity eternal life, and not only by reason of God's covenant, but also by reason of the work itself.' Vasquez goes still further, saying, 'that the good works of just persons are, without any covenant, or acceptation, worthy of the reward of eternal life, and have an equal value of condignity to the obtaining of eternal glory, and that there comes no accession of dignity to their works by the merits or person of Christ.' Such are the comments of their most distinguished divines.

On this unscriptural and pharisaical doctrine of human merit rests a whole fabric of other errors, which stand or fall with it. They tell men of works of supererogation ; that some saints are so very good, that they have merit more than sufficient for their own salvation, and that this surplus of merit is at the disposal of the Church, to make up the deficient merits of others. But what is this other than a practical denial of the perfection of Christ's righteousness and of our completeness in him ? Here are sinners coming to the help of the Son of God in the salvation of lost souls : sinners, who, if saved

themselves, owe their heaven and all its joys to his free grace, joined with him in the work of mediation, as though his influence in the court of heaven were not great enough, or as though he were not sufficiently compassionate to allow the direct approach of penitent souls to himself. See their practice, as prescribed in a book now in common use, called *The Key of Heaven*. This is the general confession. 'I confess to Almighty God, to the blessed Mary, ever virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly, &c. Therefore I beseech the blessed Mary, ever virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, and all the saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me,' &c. Now here observe two vitally important things. The saints and angels are *equally* honoured with Almighty God, by having confession made to them conjointly with him. In the second place, here is a total omission of the name and the office of the ONE MEDIATOR. He is altogether excluded from the honour of listening to the penitent confession of his people's sins, or of interceding with Almighty God for them. The Virgin Mary is constantly addressed as the Queen of Heaven, the Mother of Mercies, our life, our hope, our most gracious Advocate, the Ark of the Covenant, the Gate of Heaven, the Morning Star, the Refuge of Sinners. These are Roman Catholic doctrines and practices in this our day, in this our city. The good Lord pardon, enlighten, and deliver their benighted and endangered souls! We cannot—we dare not—we would not thus believe and thus act. But the Church, which professes that she cannot err in faith, though St. Paul warned the Church at Rome in his day that it might fall and even be CUT OFF (Rom. xi. 22.); that Church, by its numerous decrees and its universal practice, requires me to believe and do as she enjoins. I refuse. She pronounces my refusal HERESY; and though I see it written of the Son of God, 'Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that THROUGH

HIM is preached unto you the remission of sins, and BY HIM all that believe are justified from all things :—though I see it written, ‘Neither is there salvation in any other ; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,’ I am proclaimed a heretic, and the unremitted sentence stands recorded against me, ‘Let him be accursed !’

5. Believing all things that are written in the Book of God, I thankfully worship the God of my fathers in a believing and devout use of the two sacraments of Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, as ordained by Christ himself. In submitting to the ordinance of Baptism, I confess my sin, my need of pardon through the blood of Christ, and of regeneration by the Holy Ghost, and regard the sacrament as a pledge from God, assuring me of the mercy that my soul requires. I joyfully partake of the Lord’s Supper as a pledge of his love to me, and a token of my love and obedience to him and his command, ‘Do this in remembrance of me.’ The Romish Church, however, has invented and appointed five other sacraments, which are not commanded *as such* in Holy Scripture, viz., Confirmation, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. Singular to say, that Church withholds one half of the sacrament of the Lord’s supper from the laity, and denies one other altogether to the clergy. Confirmation, as prescribed in the Church of England, I value as a means of grace likely to be largely blessed to the young of our flocks. Penance, as enjoined by the Church of Rome, I see not in the Bible ; and as little do I perceive there of Extreme Unction. Holy Orders is the honourable and responsible office of the clergy, to which they are set apart by the imposition of hands and solemn prayer. ‘Marriage is honourable in ALL, and the bed undefiled.’ Here, again, I stop where Scripture stops, and leave things with their real names and in their proper character. But Rome, unlike one whose name appears in the history of her uncorrupted infancy, and who said, in his own name and that of others, ‘We have no dominion over your faith,’ (2 Cor. i. 24.)—Rome

I say, with imperious boldness commands me to advance to the full extent of her seven sacraments. I deliberately disclaim her authority. I tell her and her ministers, that what Christ said of the Scribes and Pharisees in his day, he says of them now, 'In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.' She charges me again with HERESY, and declares me accursed. 'If any one shall say that the sacraments of the new law were not all instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, or that they are more or fewer than seven; or, moreover, that any one of these is not truly and properly a sacrament;—LET HIM BE ACCURSED!'

6. Of one of our two sacraments I am privileged often to partake, though if I were a Romanist I should prove myself a good Catholic by participating only once a year, provided it be at or about Easter. So runs their Catechism. In this sacrament of the Lord's Supper I perceive a lively representation of my Saviour's body broken upon the cross, and of his blood shed for me and for many for the remission of our sins. I eat the bread in remembrance that Christ died for me, and feed on him in my heart by faith with thanksgiving. I drink the wine in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for me, and am thankful. Thus I hold communion with our risen and glorified Lord, and with his people; partaking, as we virtually do, of the same bread and the same cup of blessing. My dear brethren, some, though, alas! too few of you, have at our common table often tasted that the Lord is gracious; have found your feeble faith strengthened, your fainting hope revived, and your languid love quickened; and have enjoyed a foretaste of the marriage supper of the Lamb in his eternal and glorious kingdom. But the Church of Rome would persuade us that all this is a delusion; that ours is no sacrament at all; and that we are guilty of the mortal sin of heresy in thus celebrating the dying love of Christ. She tells us and demands our entire belief, that 'immediately after consecration the true body of our Lord and his true blood exist under the species of bread and wine, together with his

soul and divinity :’ that ‘by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood, which conversion is conveniently and properly called by the Holy Catholic Church, **TRANSUBSTANTIATION :**’ and that ‘the very worship which is due to the true God is to be paid to this most holy sacrament.’ That worship accordingly is offered to the consecrated wafer, which they substitute for bread, and which is preserved in a little box upon their altars, and carried about to receive the adoration of the faithful. We have carefully examined Holy Scripture on this point, and see there no countenance given to a doctrine, which we are sure gives rise to abominable idolatries ; to the most abject and degrading superstitions ; and to absurdities which contradict our every sense. Perhaps its worst consequence, and that whereby it is most destructive of the souls of men, and most largely derogates from the glory of Christ, is the sacrifice of the Mass, a service in which the Priest professes to offer up the host, *i. e.* the sacramental bread, as a true propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead. Whereas the Scriptures describe the death of Christ upon the cross, as ‘the one offering by which he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified.’ It is, moreover, comparatively a novelty. ‘It doth not appear to have been so much as broached till the 8th century, when it was so far from being received as the doctrine of the Church, that it was warmly opposed by the most learned men of that age, and censured as an innovation. The name itself was no older than the 12th century, nor was the doctrine ever decreed or established by any general council, till the Council of Trent in the year 1551.’ Then the doctrine was set forth in all its monstrous characters, and ten separate canons each terminate with a solemn curse upon the man who dissents from it. (Canon 1. Sess. xiii.)

The denial of transubstantiation was ‘the head

and front of their offending,' who, in the reign of Queen Mary, paid the last earthly penalty of presumed HERESY. For this crime Rome has ever demanded the penalty of blood, when she has had the power to enforce her commands. For the very heresy, of which she pronounces us guilty, whenever we meet together at yonder table, Bishops Crammer, Latimer, and Ridley, died in the flames at Oxford, being adjudged *obstinate heretics*. For this heresy Mr. Rogers, one of the holiest men and best preachers of the day, and a worthy labourer in the field of Scripture translation and circulation, stained Smithfield with his blood. For this heresy the amiable and learned Bishop Hooper, in his 60th year, died a lingering death in the streets of Gloucester. But I forbear. The day of judgment will have the history of Rome recited before the listening universe, and may we then be numbered with the men, who thus in the way which she calls heresy worshipped the God of their fathers even unto death.

7. In many other matters of faith, the Papacy condemns us as heretics: but time allows me to mention one more only. We disown their doctrine of Purgatory. We take our defensive stand in this as in other matters upon the written word, believing to the full all things that are written in the law and in the prophets, in the Old and New Testaments. There we read, and exultingly read the blessed record of God, that 'the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth from all sin.' By the blood, we understand the death of the Son of God. How does this cleanse from sin? Not merely in a moral sense, by its sanctifying influence upon the heart and life, but in a sacrificial sense, as an atonement, satisfying the justice and law of God on our behalf, and so taking away the guilt of sin. For we have 'redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.' And whom does this precious blood thus cleanse? Them that believe in Jesus. And to what extent does it cleanse them? *From all sin*. We are also told, that 'there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin.' What need or place, indeed, can there be for other sacrifice, for more atonement,

when Jesus has 'now once in the end of the world appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself?' But this, which satisfies eternal justice, is not enough for vindictive Rome, whose very element seems to be vengeance, wrath, and suffering. She asks her trembling children, 'whither go all such as die in venial sin, or not having fully satisfied for the punishments due to their mortal sins?' And she puts this answer into their quivering lips: 'To purgatory, till they have made full satisfaction for them, and then to Heaven.'

My brethren, does this look like Christianity—the glad tidings of great joy to all people? If you believe this, you believe that there are sins, from which the blood of Christ does not cleanse the believing soul. And yet these are venial sins—very pardonable offences against God and our neighbours! For these we may not be able to make full satisfaction in the present life. And who could tell—could even the Pope himself tell at the hour of death, whether that full satisfaction has been made? The soul must go down to purgatory—a place of torment, where, as their most learned doctors teach, the sufferings are caused by the same fire as torments the damned in hell. Bellarmine owns that almost all their divines teach, 'that the damned, and the souls in purgatory, are tormented in the same fire and in the same place.' There they are cleansed by way of satisfaction to the justice of God! Ask you, how long? **TILL**, oh! that fearful adverb of time—of time, which must stretch on into eternity—'**TILL** they have made **FULL SATISFACTION**.' Oh! my wronged and deceived brethren, ye children of this stern and cruel parent, does the question never arise, as ye sit by your domestic hearths, or kneel in your public assemblies, deeming yourselves the faithful, 'Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire?' You may have enjoyed all the services of your Church down to the false sacrament of extreme unction: you may have revived to live and die in venial sin: in your departing hour you may commend your departing spirit to the hands of God, and

invoke the Queen of heaven, and all the saints, Michael and all the angels, to your succour: you may close your eyes in hope that they will meet you at the gates of glory: and then—*then*, if your Church cannot err in faith, you must open your eyes being ‘tormented in that flame.’ But you are soothed by the assurance, that the souls in that distress are helped by the suffrages of the faithful: by the prayers and alms offered for them: by Papal indulgences: and chiefly by the sacrifice of the Mass. Here, again, we meet with the figment of human merit, and a salvation which has and needs no Christ. Rome would, however, stop our heretical mouths by her canon. Listen to her words—then turn away from her for ever. ‘If any one shall say, that after receiving the grace of justification, any penitent sinner has his fault so forgiven, and the guilt of eternal punishment taken away, that there remains no guilt of temporal punishment to be discharged either in this world, or that to come, in purgatory, before he can enter into the kingdom of Heaven, let him be accursed.’

Thus, beloved, the way in which we worship the God of our fathers, believing all things, but no more than all things, which are written in the Holy Scriptures, they of Rome call HERESY; and their unrepealed, unrenounced, and unsoftened canons pronounce us HERETICS and ACCURSED. And shall we return railing for railing? No: but contrariwise blessing. And this shall be our prayer: ‘Father, forgive them, they know not what they do. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.’

Dear brethren, our Jubilee of the Bible is near its last hour, and you and I shall never celebrate together a similar one on earth. ‘See, I have set before you this day life and good, death and evil.’ You have had given you a sketch of the two systems—that of Romanism and that of Protestantism. Never again dream that their differences are unimportant. They are eternally important, notwithstanding the efforts that are made in Bath and its vicinity to gloss them over. The Romanists know this full

well, and they laugh in their sleeves at those of us, who are lulled to sleep on the soft pillow of modern liberality and indifference. I know that some of you visit their places of worship, and possibly may be occasionally drawn to their gay festivities. Excuse the warmth of my anxiety for your safety, and of my zeal for the truth of God. But, in unison with the greatest divines of our own and other great divisions of the Reformed Church, I tell you plainly, that if there be truth in prophecy, the Roman Catholic religion is the GREAT APOSTACY foretold in the prophetic oracles, and they who deliberately embrace it are guilty of the GREAT TRANSGRESSION, so earnestly deprecated by David. I speak not of any individuals, but of men as the upholders of a system of false doctrine and idolatrous practices, whether in England, Ireland, France, or Italy; and I say, as Moses did to the congregation in the days of Dathan and Abiram, 'Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins.' The religion of the Bible is the truth of God. Examine it in all its parts. Labour to acquire a clear view of all its doctrines, praying earnestly for the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Embrace its exceeding great and precious promises by a living faith, working by love. You will not then be satisfied with nominal or political Protestantism, which will never save the man who holds the truth in unrighteousness. Be what you profess to be — persons protesting against the errors of a Church too corrupt for any safely to remain in her communion, and shewing a purer faith by a holier life. Then, if yours be the way which they call HERESY, pray for them that calumniate your religion, and meekly say, THE LORD REBUKE THEE.

THE END.

ALSO, JUST PUBLISHED,
THE BIBLE SET FREE. Price 6d.

Printed by GEORGE WOOD, Parsonage Lane, Bath.

BX5136
.E17

unacc.

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



48 451 209